



EIS001036

WILLIAM L. CLAY, JR.
4TH DISTRICT

MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

RECEIVED

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ROOM 221
STATE CAPITOL
JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI 65101
873-751-2228
TDD 873-751-3989

FAX COVERSHEET

To: Mr. Hank Thompson

Phone: 314-776-4295

From: Sen. Clay/Debbie

Date: 1-19-00

You should receive 7 page(s) including this coversheet.

Subject: U. S. Department of Energy's Public Hearing
Thursday, January 20, 2000
The America's Convention Center

Hank - I called the 800 number to put you on the list of witnesses and was told that you should show up at approximately 10:30 a.m. and speak with the registration coordinators to get a spot. I hope you will be able to speak early. They seemed uncertain of that. They will hear witnesses from 11:00 a.m. til 2:00 p.m. and then again from 6:00 p.m. til 10:00 p.m.

Hope it goes well - let us know! Thank you.

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STATEMENT BY SENATOR WILLIAM L. CLAY, JR.**January 20, 2000**

(This statement is being submitted on my behalf, as comments on the Department of Energy's Draft Environmental Impact Statement and its proposal to ship high-level radioactive waste from 77 of the nation's operating commercial nuclear plant sites and 5 DoE sites to the proposed Yucca Mountain Radioactive Waste Repository in Nevada, for storage and disposal. While I regret that I am unable to be present at the January 20th hearing due to a prior commitment, I have asked Hank Thompson to read my statement for the record.)

1 St. Louis has the distinct commercial and transportation benefit of being located in the center of our country. Major national highways and railways converge here in St. Louis and traverse through our city and county communities. The DoE's proposal, however, would turn St. Louis' central location into a health and safety liability for the citizens of this region.

Seventy-nine of our nation's 103 operating nuclear power reactors are located east of the Mississippi River; while the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste storage facility is located far to the west. Although the DoE has not made any commitments as to the specific routes, waste volumes, or timing of this proposed massive shipping campaign; it is clear that routes through St. Louis, because of its unique location, are most likely to be the favored routes for this proposal.

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1 cont.

Railroad corporations commit most of their track maintenance funds to their high volume rail lines – which specifically means large population and transportation centers such as St. Louis.

Unfortunately, despite the sizable investment made by railroad companies, rail accidents still occur within our communities as well as on St. Louis bridges that span the Mississippi River. Additionally, vehicular accidents involving long-haul trucking and freight frequently occur on our highways. I am concerned that when the decision is made as to what routes will be chosen for transporting this nuclear waste, our city will be the de facto 'winner.'

To open our roads and rail lines to the transportation of highly toxic and hazardous nuclear waste – material that has accumulated over 30 years - - would be irresponsible. High-level radioactive waste must not be funneled through our densely populated region.

2

I believe the proposal being presented today is unacceptable. With all the critical questions that remain regarding the present and future viability of the Yucca Mountain geology and hydrology, and its ability to effectively shield the radioactive materials from our environment, I believe the DoE must step back from this proposal and re-evaluate its options.

The Draft EIS seeks to demonstrate that it is possible to transport high-level wastes across state lines and that a safe permanent disposal facility has been found.

3

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2 cont.

I believe such reassurances are unwarranted and premature, so I urge the Department of Energy to go back to the drawing board and defer its recommendation to Congress and the President, until we have conclusive answers to the many troubling questions in this proposal.

In the interim, I believe our federal government should devote its efforts to improving the storage facilities ON-SITE at the nuclear plant themselves – where the waste can be safely stored for decades – until a truly safe national solution can be found.